Acting Edition

Treasure Island

by Mary Zimmerman

From the novel by
Robert Louis Stevenson

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SAMUEL FRENCH

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TREASURE ISLAND premiered on October 7th, 2015, at the Lookingglass Theatre (Rachel Kraft, Executive Director; Andy White, Artistic Director) in Chicago in a co-production with Berkeley Repertory Theatre. The production was directed by Mary Zimmerman, with set design by Todd Rosenthal, costume design by Ana Kuzmanic, and lighting design by TJ Gerckens. The sound design and music composition was by Andre Pluess, and the puppetry design and construction was by Blair Thomas. The production stage manager was Jeri Fredrickson. The Chicago cast was as follows:

JIM HAWKINS . . . . . John Babbo
MRS. HAWKINS/GEORGE MERRY/
CAPTAIN FLINT THE PARROT (PUPPETEER) . . . . . Kasey Foster
BILLY BONES/REDRUTH/JOHNNY . . . . . Christopher Donahue
DR. LIVESEY . . . . . Andy White
BLACK DOG/BEN GUNN/PIRATE . . . . . Steve Pickering
PEW/TOM/MORGAN . . . . . Anthony Irons
CONSTABLE DANCE/DICK/O'BRIEN . . . . . Travis Delgado
SQUIRE TRELAWNEY . . . . . Matt DeCaro
ISRAEL HANDS/JOB . . . . . Ariel Shafir
CAPTAIN SMOLLETT . . . . . Philip Smith
LONG JOHN SILVER . . . . . Larry DiStasi
ABRAHAM GRAY/MUSICIAN . . . . . Matthew Yee
MUSICIANS . . . . . Greg Hirte & LJ Slavin

The show opened at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (Susie Medak, Executive Producer; Tony Taccone, Artistic Director) on April 29th, 2016, with Megan McClintock as the production stage manager and the following cast differences:

DR. LIVESEY . . . . . Alex Moggridge
LONG JOHN SILVER . . . . . Steven Epp
ISRAEL HANDS/JOB/TOWNSPERSON . . . . . Demetrios Troy

CHARACTERS

JIM HAWKINS – A boy of about fourteen

MRS. HAWKINS – His mother, proprietor of the Admiral Benbow

BILLY BONES – An old buccaneer

DR. LIVESEY – An educated man

BLACK DOG – A buccaneer, missing two fingers

BLIND PEW – An old, blind buccaneer

CONSTABLE DANCE

SQUIRE TRELAWNEY – A wealthy landowner

REDRUTH – Servant to Squire Trelawney

CAPTAIN SMOLLETT – An experienced sea captain

LONG JOHN SILVER – A one-legged pirate, appearing first as a cook

CAPTAIN FLINT – Long John Silver's parrot (also the name of the pirates' old commander)

TOM – A sailor

ABRAHAM GRAY – A sailor

DICK – A sailor who converts to piracy

ISRAEL HANDS – A pirate

MORGAN – A pirate

GEORGE MERRY – A pirate

JOHNNY – A dim pirate

JOB – A pirate

BEN GUNN – A marooned man

ENSEMBLE – Various Villagers, Musicians, Figure of Captain Flint, Alan (offstage voice), O'Brien, additional unnamed Sailors and Pirates

SETTING

The Coast of Devon, Bristol, the high seas, and Treasure Island.

TIME

The mid-eighteenth-century.

A NOTE ON CASTING

The following breakdown conveys the division of roles in the original production of *TREASURE ISLAND*. It could easily be divided in other ways.

FIRST ACTOR: Jim Hawkins

SECOND ACTOR: Billy Bones, Redruth, Johnny

THIRD ACTOR: First Villager, Blind Pew, Tom, Morgan, First Voice in Chant

FOURTH ACTOR: Second Villager, Constable Dance, Dick, O'Brien

FIFTH ACTOR: Third Villager, Israel Hands, Job

SIXTH ACTOR: Fourth Villager, Pirate (in the attack on the Admiral Benbow), Abraham Gray, Musician

SEVENTH ACTOR: Dr. Livesey, Horse

EIGHTH ACTOR: Black Dog, Ben Gunn, Pirate (in the mutiny and attack on the stockade), Second Voice in Chant

NINTH ACTOR: Squire Trelawney

TENTH ACTOR: Horse, Captain Smollett, the Figure of Captain Flint in Ben Gunn's narrative

ELEVENTH ACTOR: Horse, Long John Silver

TWELFTH ACTOR: Mrs. Hawkins, George Merry, Captain Flint the parrot (voice and puppeteer), Singer

TWO ADDITIONAL MUSICIANS (OPTIONAL) – The roles of the musicians are flexible. They can be part of the ensemble, they can be a doubled part with supporting actors who can also play instruments. Either way, they should be fully incorporated into the world of the play.

NOTE ON THE PLAY & PRODUCTION DESIGN

It was my idea with this adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* to stay close to the tone of the original novel. Its joy should come from the wild adventurousness of it, the danger, the daring, the thrill. Although it is full of humor, irony, and extraordinarily florid characters who speak in unforgettable ways, it is not essentially a comedy. It has the seriousness of all great literature for young people. There is importance to its events and important realizations in the end about the cost of treasure and of dreams.

The description of our production design and staging that follows is meant only as a potentially helpful illustration of what was, not what must be. The play could be accomplished with very little.

Our set was comprised of a long, narrow, slightly concave deck – the deck of the *Hispaniola* – that appeared to be suspended by its rigging from the grid of the theatre, but which was, in fact, resting on curved tracks. By this mechanism, the entire deck could rock about 40 degrees back and forth either by being pushed from both sides by actors, or by virtue of all the actors walking to one side of the deck, which caused it to tilt from their weight. It rocked gloriously during the launch of the *Hispaniola*, and gently under many of the other shipboard scenes, including the long "Israel Hands" scene which concludes in it lurching dramatically in a way that saves Jim's life.

In the first part of the play, a few barrels, chairs, and a rug served to make this ship's deck the Admiral Benbow Inn. Upstage and above the main stage there was a second playing area as well, accessed by removable stairs, almost as steep as a ship's ladder. This above area served as the street outside the Inn, the upstairs of the Inn, the upper deck of the *Hispaniola*, and so on. These playing areas changed function very rapidly as did their narrative relation to one other so that, for instance, when Jim and Redruth meet their companions in Bristol, the above is initially the deck of the *Hispaniola* and Jim and Redruth are below on the dock, but as soon as they climb up to join their friends, everyone immediately returns to the lower deck, which becomes Trelawney's quarters. Similarly, the stairs were not only the stairs of both the Inn and the *Hispaniola*, but a boat for the pirates on their treasure hunt, the coach that transports Redruth and Jim, part of the stockade, and the hiding place of Jim on the *Hispaniola*. The "shrouds" – the ladderlike part of the ship's rigging – were climbable, and they also served as the walls of the stockade through which Jim and Dr. Livesey speak, and the tree Jim climbs on the island.

Aside from the large deck itself, ships were represented in many ways. There were miniature ships to serve for the *Hispaniola* "in the distance"; actors sat with one leg on and one leg off the deck when they were pirates on the jolly boats. The boat in which Captain Smollett, Trelawney, and the others escape was made with chairs and two oarlocks mounted on poles dropped into the deck. The stairs served as a boat as well. Ben Gunn's little boat was a barrel sawed in half pulled on a rope across the stage. There was additionally a trap door in the deck which served as a hold on the ship, the fireplace in the stockade, and the hole where the treasure has been dug up.

The island was created by adding a few leaves to the rigging. Captain Flint, Silver's parrot, had two puppet forms: perched on Silver's shoulder and operated by the actor by wires through his sleeve; and as a flying bird. He was voiced by an actor nearby. The treasure in the cave was shredded bits of gold mylar dropped everywhere from above.

Quick scenes of violence such as the killing of Tom by Long John Silver and the battle at the stockade were played in slow motion; and the chase across the beach to the stockade was done slowly as well, with the cries of the characters drawn out as well, to comic effect.

The pirates, vivid as they are, are not fantastical, but real men; filthy, hardened sea-dogs. Their costumes should look as if they could stand up by themselves.

Finally, although I have preserved many of Robert Louis Stevenson's chapter titles as scene titles, they are not meant to indicate any break in the action. The scenes should flow directly from one to the next. At times, the characters address the audience directly.

A NOTE ON MUSIC

Two traditional sea shanties, "Roll the Old Chariot Along," and "Leave Her, Johnny," were performed in the play, and they inspired the tone of the original compositions. The musicians, who played violin, acoustic guitar, mandolin, flute, piccolo, and penny whistle were dressed as sailors and were frequently part of the action.

A license to produce *Treasure Island* includes a performance license for "Up on the Head" and "Coracle Song". Sheet music for the songs will be provided upon approval of a production license.

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ACT I

The Old Buccaneer

(The Admiral Benbow, an Inn by the sea. Music. **JIM HAWKINS**, *a boy of fourteen or so, enters. Close behind him is* **BILLY BONES**, *a large, intimidating man in a tricorner hat with a sea chest on his shoulder and a haunted demeanor. Music ends.* **JIM** *begins to address the audience.)*

JIM. And so, to begin –

BILLY BONES. *(Interrupting.)* You there!

JIM. Sir?

BILLY BONES. A glass of rum, boy and quick about it.

JIM. Yes, sir.

BILLY BONES. Where is the master of this place?

(**JIM** *hands* **BILLY BONES** *the rum as he sets down his sea chest.)*

JIM. Dead, sir.

*(***MRS. HAWKINS**, *Jim's mother, enters unnoticed.)*

BILLY BONES. What? Nought but you then?

MRS. HAWKINS. Me and the lad – Jim, sir. We manage.

BILLY BONES. Well, by thunder, it's a handy cove ye have, and a pleasant sittyated grog-shop. Much company?

MRS. HAWKINS. Very little company, the more's the pity.

BILLY BONES. Well then, this is the berth for me. I'm a plain man; rum and bacon and eggs is what I want, and that head up there – for to watch the sea.

MRS. HAWKINS. What might we call you?

BILLY BONES. What mought you call me?

(Hadn't thought about it.) You mought call me "Captain."

(He is pleased with this idea. **MRS. HAWKINS** *is dubious.)*

MRS. HAWKINS. Very well – Captain.

BILLY BONES. There.

(Throws money carelessly on the floor.)

You can tell me when I've worked through that.

*(***JIM** *gathers the money.* **MRS. HAWKINS** *starts towards the chest.)*

MRS. HAWKINS. Shall I unpack your chest for you? And air your –

BILLY BONES. Stay away from that chest! No troublin' about that chest! You stay away from it!

MRS. HAWKINS. As you please. Jim, take the Captain's –

BILLY BONES. Nor him either! Stay away!

MRS. HAWKINS. Well, then – Captain – I'll make up your room. *(Starting to go.)* View of the sea.

BILLY BONES. View of the road. Ma'am. View of the road. I'll watch the sea out of doors by day.

MRS. HAWKINS. As you please.

(She leaves. **BILLY BONES** *watches her go, singing softly until she's gone.)*

BILLY BONES.

FIFTEEN MEN ON THE DEAD MAN'S CHEST
YO HO HO AND A BOTTLE OF –

(Suddenly grabbing **JIM**.*)*

Now listen, mate, how would ye like bit of employment, just between you and me –?

JIM. What sort –?

BILLY BONES. *(Showing him a coin.)* There's a silver four-penny in it for ye on the first of every month – and no dooty but to keep a weather eye open for a seafarin' man with one leg –

(As **JIM** *reaches for the coin as* **BILLY BONES** *puts it away again.)*

JIM. One leg, sir – Captain?

BILLY BONES. Aye – and if you catch sight o' him don't say a word, but come and find me – and double-time too, you savvy?

JIM. Aye, Captain, aye!

MRS. HAWKINS. *(Offstage.)* Time for bed, Jim!

JIM. Coming!

BILLY BONES. Remember, Jim lad, a seafarin' man with one leg!

MRS. HAWKINS. To bed, Jim. Now.

(Music. Throughout the song we see the passing of days and evenings at the Admiral Benbow. **BILLY BONES** *exits the Inn to gaze at the sea above with a spyglass then returns to drink over and over, becoming*

increasingly unmanegable. The **VILLAGERS** *and* **MUSICIANS** *enter with chairs and sit and drink, frightened but fascinated by* **BILLY BONES**. **JIM** *serves, cleans up and repeatedly approaches* **BILLY BONES** *for his monthly coin and is rebuffed.)*

[MUSIC NO. 01 – UP ON THE HEAD]

MRS. HAWKINS.
ALL DAY UP ON THE HEAD
THE OLD CAPTAIN –

JIM.
– OR SO HE SAID –

MRS. HAWKINS.
– GAZED AT THE WAVES
AND THEY GAZED BACK
HAGGARD AND EMPTY AND BLUE.
MONTHS PASSED UP ON THE HEAD

JIM.
SIR, MAY I HAVE...?

MRS. HAWKINS.
BUT HE JUST SHOOK HIS HEAD.

MRS. HAWKINS & ENSEMBLE.
HE NEITHER SETTLED NOR WENT AWAY
JUST GAZED AT THE WAVES THAT GAZED BACK.

ALL (EXCEPT BILLY BONES).
WHEN EVENING CAME TO THE OLD BENBOW
HE SANG HIS SONG

BILLY BONES. Yo ho ho!

ALL (EXCEPT BILLY BONES).
THE VILLAGERS GAZED AND HE GAZED RIGHT BACK
HAGGARD AND EMPTY AND BLUE.

(Music continues underneath the following. **BILLY BONES** *is very loud and drunk.* **MRS. HAWKINS** *and* **JIM** *stand apart.)*

BILLY BONES. So I says to the old swab, "See *me*? See *me* at execution dock? You'll walk the plank afore that by thunder!" and – where is it? Where is it? Rum!

MRS. HAWKINS. He'll be the death of us Jim and the old Admiral Benbow. Those stories! Every night! He'll frighten everyone away! What decent person –?

FIRST VILLAGER. Go on Captain!

SECOND VILLAGER. What then?

BILLY BONES. And we sawed 'im open we did, all the fishes runnin' out o' him and the sea snakes too comin' out o' the eyes

THIRD VILLAGER. No!

SECOND VILLAGER. We can't bear it!

FOURTH VILLAGER. Go on!

JIM. I think they rather like it.

MOTHER. Even so, he hasn't paid in months.

(Her spoken "months" coincides with the first sung word below.)

ALL (EXCEPT BILLY BONES).
MONTHS PASSED AT THE OLD BENBOW

JIM.
SIR MAY I HAVE –?

ALL (EXCEPT BILLY BONES).
BUT HE SHOOK HIS HEAD –

BILLY BONES. – No! –

ALL (EXCEPT BILLY BONES).
– TOLD HIS TALES AND SEARCHED FOR SAILS

ALL (EXCEPT BILLY BONES).

AND DRANK THE NIGHT AND DAY THROUGH – OH YES –
AND DRANK THE NIGHT AND DAY THROUGH.

*(**DR. LIVESEY** enters. The song comes to an end, but **BILLY BONES** is now singing his own tune, demanding others join in.)*

BILLY BONES.

FIFTEEN MEN ON A DEAD MAN'S CHEST –

I can't hear ye!

*(As **DR. LIVESEY** greets and speaks with **MRS. HAWKINS**, the **VILLAGERS** join **BILLY BONES**, singing feebly at first, but with increasing strength and speed over and over:)*

BILLY BONES & VILLAGERS.

FIFTEEN MEN ON A DEAD MAN'S CHEST
YO-HO-HO AND A BOTTLE OF RUM.
DRINK AND THE DEVIL HAD DONE FOR THE REST
YO-HO-HO AND A BOTTLE OF RUM

DR. LIVESEY. Good Evening, madame.

MRS. HAWKINS. Dr. Livesey! What a pleasant surprise.

DR. LIVESEY. I stopped by to see how old Taylor is getting on – and to see how you and Jim are –

BILLY BONES. Louder!!

DR. LIVESEY. *(Distracted.)* – What is this?

MRS. HAWKINS. Please pay no heed Doctor. Just one of our –

BILLY BONES. Louder, ye swabs!

MRS. HAWKINS. – guests.

DR. LIVESEY. I do wish I could have done more for your husband, Mrs. Hawkins –

MRS. HAWKINS. You're the best of doctors, Dr. Livesey.

DR. LIVESEY. Still, one can't help but wish, at times like these –

BILLY BONES. *(Aggravated by the conversation.)* Silence! I can't hear meself!

(All the **VILLAGERS** *stop instantly, but* **DR. LIVESEY** *carries on.)*

DR. LIVESEY. – for yet more skill, more understanding. I'm afraid we in the medical profession are still –

BILLY BONES. Silence, there between decks!

DR. LIVESEY. – at the very dawn of our –

BILLY BONES. *(Enraged.)* Damn ye to hell and silence!!

(Pause. **DR. LIVESEY** *turns to* **BILLY BONES**. *Piqued, but very calm.)*

DR. LIVESEY. Were you addressing me, sir?

BILLY BONES. By thunder, I were! And damn ye too if ye speak another word!

DR. LIVESEY. I shall speak another word, sir, and it is this: if you keep on drinking rum, the world will soon be rid of a very dirty scoundrel.

BILLY BONES. Why! I'll –

*(***BILLY BONES** *pulls a small blade and rushes at* **DR. LIVESEY**, *staggering.* **DR. LIVESEY** *doesn't move a muscle as* **BILLY BONES** *loses his balance and falls at his feet.)*

DR. LIVESEY. If you do not put that knife this instant in your pocket, I promise, upon my honour, you will hang at the next assize.

(They stare at each other. **BILLY BONES** *puts up his weapon and retreats, grumbling.)*

DR. LIVESEY. And now sir, you may count I'll have an eye upon you day and night. I'm not only a doctor, I'm a magistrate; and if I catch a breath of complaint against you, if it's only for a piece of incivility like tonight's, I'll take means to have you hunted down and routed out of this county. *(He pauses.)* Let that suffice. Madame, I take my leave. You know where to send for me – on the instant – should the need arise.

(Music. Everyone departs except **JIM**.*)*

Black Dog

(It is several weeks later, in the morning. **JIM** *starts to set a table.* **BLACK DOG** *enters. He is sly and menacing, with a false air of sweetness. His right hand is missing two fingers. He wears a tall black hat. Underneath, his head is shaved on one side, in the manner of a prisoner just released. Music ends.)*

BLACK DOG. *(Softly.)* You there.

*(***JIM** *is startled, drops a dish.)*

JIM. Sir?

BLACK DOG. Come here, sonny.

*(***JIM** *doesn't move.)*

Come nearer here.

*(***JIM** *reluctantly takes a step nearer. He is frightened.)*

Is this here table for my mate, Bill?

JIM. I don't know your mate Bill.

BLACK DOG. Who's it for?

JIM. It's for a person we call the Captain, who stays here at the Inn.

BLACK DOG. Well, my mate Bill would be called the Captain, as like as not. He has a cut on one cheek, and a mighty pleasant way with him, particularly in drink, has my mate, Bill.

JIM. *(Very nervous.)* Oh.

BLACK DOG. We'll put it, for argument like, that your Captain has a cut on his cheek – and we'll put it, that cheek's the right one. Now: is my mate Bill in this here house?

JIM. *(After a pause.)* He's out walking.

BLACK DOG. Which way, sonny? Which way is he gone?

JIM. Up the head, sir.

BLACK DOG. And when will he return?

JIM. For his breakfast, sir.

BLACK DOG. For his breakfast, aye. Well, I'll just sit me down here and wait for him. The sight of me will be as good as drink to my mate Bill.

(He sits at the table – which is a barrel – and starts to tuck a napkin under his chin.)

JIM. The expression on his face made me think perhaps this was not true.

BLACK DOG. *(As though overhearing.)* What's that?

JIM. Nothing. Very well.

*(***JIM** *starts to leave.)*

BLACK DOG. Where you going?

JIM. I need to get –

BLACK DOG. *(Standing.)* Avast! Back in here!

JIM. But I need to get the milk –

*(***BLACK DOG***, enraged, kicks over the barrel, the utensils and plate go flying.)*

BLACK DOG. BACK IN HERE ya sneakin' little bilge rat afore I ring ya scrawny neck!

(The barrel rolls to a stop. **BLACK DOG** *becomes quiet again. He rights the barrel as* **JIM** *picks up the place setting.* **BLACK DOG** *then takes* **JIM** *under his arm.)*

There. There's a good boy. I have a son of my own, as like you as two blocks, and he's all the pride of my 'art. But the great thing for boys is discipline, sonny – discipline. Now if you had sailed along of Bill, you wouldn't have stood there to be spoke to twice –

(Sees **BILLY BONES** *approach.)*

– and here, sure enough, is my mate Bill, bless his old 'art to be sure. You and me'll just go back into the parlor sonny and get behind the door and we'll give Bill a little surprise – bless his 'art I say again.

*(***BLACK DOG** *pulls* **JIM** *aside as* **BILLY BONES** *enters.)*

Bill!

*(***BILLY BONES** *spins around.)*

BILLY BONES. Black Dog!

BLACK DOG. Black Dog as ever was, come for to see his old shipmate Billy, at the "Admiral Benbow" Inn. Ah, Bill. Billy Bones. We have seen a sight of times, us two, since I lost them two talons.

BILLY BONES. So you've run me down. Speak up, then – what is it?

BLACK DOG. I'll have a glass of rum from this dear child here, as I've took such a liking to; and we'll sit down, if you please and talk square, like old shipmates.

*(***JIM** *goes to sideboard. The* **MEN** *sit at the barrel and mutter to each other in a way we can't comprehend.)*

BILLY BONES. By thunder! The devil I will!

(More mumbling, with increasing anger, until **BILLY BONES** *jumps up.)*

BILLY BONES. No, no, no, no; and an end of it! If it comes to swinging, swing all, Say I!

BLACK DOG. Now, Bill –

BILLY BONES. Never! Never!

(Both **MEN** *draw their cutlasses.* **BLACK DOG** *grabs* **JIM**, *but as this doesn't impede* **BILLY BONES**, *he soon throws him aside. They fight.* **BILLY BONES** *gets the upper hand. As* **BLACK DOG** *flees,* **BILLY BONES** *strikes at him, but his cutlass is caught by the Admiral Benbow sign above, and* **BLACK DOG** *escapes.* **BILLY BONES** *is suddenly in deep physical distress. He staggers, gasping back into the Inn.)*

Jim – Rum!

JIM. Are you hurt?

BILLY BONES. No! Not hurt! I must – I must – get away from here.

(He falls.)

JIM. I'll call Doctor Livesey –

BILLY BONES. No! Now, listen Jim – you saw that man just now?

JIM. Black Dog?

BILLY BONES. Ah! Black Dog. He's a bad 'un; but there's worse that put him on. Now, hear me! If I can't get away from here and they tip me the Black Spot... Mind you, it's my old sea chest they're after. Well then, you get on a horse, and go to –

(Muttering to himself.) – well, yes, yes I will! I'll do it!

(To **JIM**.*)* Go to that eternal doctor swab and tell him to pipe all hands – magistrates and constables and sich – and they'll lay 'em aboard at the Admiral Benbow – all

old Flint's crew – all that's left, all that's wanted still. They'll catch 'em all! You've heard of Old Captain Flint? The greatest buccaneer that ever were?

JIM. I –

(Low, haunting music begins.)

BILLY BONES. I were Captain Flint's first mate – and I'm the only one who knows the place where it is.

JIM. Where what is?

BILLY BONES. That's what they're after. He gave it me for safekeeping at Savannah while he lay dyin' – Jim – he gave it me and no other. But don't you say a word of any of this, unless they put the Black Spot on me.

JIM. But what is the Black Spot?

*(***MRS. HAWKINS** *enters. Music ends.)*

MRS. HAWKINS. Jim, I thought I told you to run on down to – what's going on here?

BILLY BONES. That's a summons, mate. That's a summons.

MRS. HAWKINS. What's he talking about? What's all this disarray?

JIM. Just an accident.

MRS. HAWKINS. Well, put it to rights.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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